

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-05 TRSE-00 IO-13 EB-08 SNM-02 DEAE-00

AID-05 OMB-01 PC-01 /092 W

-----068802 261244Z /45

R 260937Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9321

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KATHMANDU 3642

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, US, NP

SUBJ: AUDIENCE WITH KING BIRENDRA

1. SUMMARY. I PAID MY FIRST CALL ON KING BIRENDRA  
AUGUST 19. MEETING LASTED APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR  
AND COVERED FOLLOWING TOPICS: US-NEPALESF  
BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL RELATIONS, ACTIVITIES  
OF US MISSION NEPAL DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE,  
DEVELOPMENT OF NEPALESE RIVERS  
FLOWING INTO INDIA,  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND NARCOTICS. LAST TWO TOPICS ARE  
BEING REPORTED IN SEPTELS. DISCUSSION WAS RELAXED  
AND I BLEEIVE GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH IING HAS BEEN  
ESTABLISHED WHICH WILL HELP SERVE OUR PURPOSES IN ANY  
BUSINESS OR  
PROBLEM THAT MAY ARISE IN FUTURE.  
END SUMMARY.

2. CHIRAN THAPAN CLOSE AIDE TO KING, SAT IN ON  
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PRELIMINARY EXCHANGE OF PLEASANTIRES BUT WAS  
DISMISSED BY KING EVEN BEOFORE THESE WRE OVER.  
DISCUSSIONS WAS RELAXED AND INFORMAL. I DID MOST  
OFTALKING BUT KING FREQUENTLY CUT INTO WHAT  
BECAME FREE FLOWING EXCHANGE. HE MADE CLEAR HE WANTED  
OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CONTINUE ON SAME INFORMAL  
BASIS THAT HAD EXISTED IN PAST WHEN HE WAS CROWN

PRINCE. ( I FIRST BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH KING WHEN AS CROWN PRINCE HE STUDIED AT HARVARD 1967-1968 AND HAVE SEEN HIM OCCASIONALLY SINCE THEN, SPECIFICALLY HIS WEDDING (1970) AND CORONATION (1975). KING APPEARED TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH AND GOOD FORM; HE DOES NOT YET APPEAR TO HAVE SUCCEDED TO THE SHAH DYNASTY TENDENCY TO OVERWEIGHT WHICH IS BEGINNING TO BE NOTICEABLE IN HIS YOUNGER BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

3. AFTER THE AMENITIES, I SAID THAT I WAS DELIGHTED TO BACK IN NEPAL FOR SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST THERE WAS THE PERSONAL SATISFACTION OF BEING BACK IN A COUNTRY WHICH I WAS FAMILIAR AND MUCH OF THE LEADERSHIP OF WHICH WAS KNOWN TO ME. I HOPED THIS WOULD FACILITATE CONDUCT OF OUR BUSINESS; MOST PARTICULARLY I LOOKED FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HIS MAJESTY AND HIS MAJESTY AND HIS GOVERNMENT IN FURTHERING OUR MUTUAL OBJECTIVES.

4. SECONDLY, DURING MY ABSENCE FROM NEPAL COUNTRY HAD CHANGED CONSIDERABLY AND I HAD MUCH TO LEARN. SIMILARLY, MY COUNTRY HAD CHANGED AND PRESIDENT HAD LAUNCHED A NUMBER OF NEW INITIATIVES SOME OF WHICH REFLECTED RENEWED INTEREST BY US IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD AND IN LDCS LIKE NEPAL. PROCESS OF RELATING THESE INITIATIVES TO NEPAL WAS A CHALLENGING

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ONE IN WHICH I HOPED TO HAVE KING'S SUPPORT AND ADVICE.

5. THIRD, MY JOB AS AMBASSADOR WAS MADE EASIER BY FACT THAT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WERE EXCELLENT AND THAT ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES WE EITHER AGREED OR WERE ABLE TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION IN A SPIRIT OF COMMUNICATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION. I ADDED THAT KING SHOULD KNOW NEPAL'S VOICE OF MODERATION IN THE NON-ALIGNED WORLD WAS APPRECIATED IN WASHINGTON. FURTHER, WE HAVE GOOD WORKING RELATIONS WITH NEPALESE DELEGATION AT UN WHICH HAS REPUTATION OF BEING WELL INFORMED ON UN BUSINESS AND HARD WORKING.

6. FOURTH, OUR OBJECTIVES IN NEPAL WERE CLEAR-CUT AND TOTALLY ABOVE BOARD. WE HAD NO POLITICAL, MILITARY ABOVE BOARD. WE HAD NO POLITICAL, MILITARY OR STRATEGIC AMBITIONS IN NEPAL AND WE WERE HERE BASICALLY TO GIVE CONCRETE MEANING TO OUR RECOGNITION OF NEPAL AS SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT STATE AND TO HELP COUNTRY DEVELOP AND IMPROVE LOT

OF ITS PEOPLE. TO THIS END WE HAD NUMBER OF  
AMERICANS IN THE COUNTRY AND I WANTED TO ASSURE  
KING THAT THEY WERE HERE AS TECHNICIANS AND  
ADVISORS OR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS SOLELY  
DEDICATED TO NEPAL'S DEVELOPMENT. AS ALLEGATIONS  
ARE OCCASIONALLY MADE ABOUT AMERICAN PRESENCE IN  
COUNTRIES LIKE NEPAL AND KATHMANDU WAS KNOWN  
FOR BAZZAR RUMORS IT GENERATES, I WANTED TO  
EMPHASIZE THIS POINT AND I ASKED KING TO LET ME  
KNOW DIRECTLY OR THROUGH HIS MINISTERS IF THERE EVER  
WAS ANY QUESTION ABOUT OUR PERSONNEL OR OUR PROGRAMS  
AND ACTIVITIES. I WAS ANXIOUS TO ADDRESS  
SUCH QUESTIONS AND CLARIFY THEM BEFORE THEY  
BECAME PROBLEMS OR IRRITANTS IN OUR  
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RELATIONS.

7. FRIENDLY, IT WAS GOOD TO BACK AMONG OLD  
FRIENDS. IN THAT CONNECTION, I REMINDED THE KING THAT  
WHEN I LAST SERVED IN NEPAL IN LATE FIFTIES  
PARLIAMENTARY FORM OF GOVERNMENT WAS IN EXISTENCE  
AND NEPALI CONGRESS, HEADED BY B.P. KOIRALA, WAS IN  
POWER AFTER WINNING NATIONAL ELECTIONS. SEVERAL OF  
THESE POLITICIANS AS WELL AS PRIME MINISTERS FROM  
PREVIOUS REGIMES HAD COME TO SEE ME TO WELCOME  
ME BACK. HERE AGAIN, KATHMANDU'S RUMOR BAZZAR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KATHMANDU 3642

MIGHT MAKE SOMETHING OF THIS AND I DID NOT WANT THIS TYPE OF CONTACT TO GIVERISE TO SPECULATION WHICH MIGHT BE MOSCONSTRUED BY PALACE. I FELT MY JOB WAS TO WORK WITH HMG BUT I DID NOT BELIEVE THIS SHOULD EXCLUDE CONTACTS WITH ELEMENTS OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT AND LD FIRENDS. KING READILY AGREED.

8. AT THIS POINT I REVERTED TO B.P. KOIRALA'S CALL AT DEPARTMENT (STATE 184549) NOTING THAT FOREIGN OFFICE HAD PREVIOUS DAY REGISTERED MILD REBUKE AT DEPARTMENT FOR RECEIVING HIM. I SAID THT BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND HERE WE HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE IN INFORMING HMG OF THIS DEVELOPMENT, AGAIN ON THE THEORY THERE SHOULD BE NO SECRETS BETWEEN US. THE KING NODDED AND BRUSHED ASIDE DEPARTMENT'S MEETING WITH B.P. AS INCONSEQUENTIAL. COMMENTC KING'S REACTION CONFIRMS OUR JUDGEMENT REPORTED KATHMANDU 3452 THAT FOREING OFFICE'S PROTEST WAS PRO FORMA AND FOR THE RECORD.

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9. WITH THESE PRELIMINARIES OUT OF THE WAY, I TURNED TO PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN INCREASING DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE TO LDGS LIKE NEPAL AND TO CONGRESSIONAL GUIDELINES IN AID LEGISLATION WHICH GIVE PRIORITY TO MEETING NEEDS OF RURAL POOR. DRAWING ON STATE 192000, I SUMMARIZED IMPLICATIONS FOR NEPAL OF PRESIDENT'S REVIEW OF US AID PROGRAMS AND LEFT WITH KING SHORT STATEMENT INCORPORATING KEY POINTS AS THEY RELATE TO OUR AID PROGRAMS IN NEPAL. US PRIORITIES APPEARED TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THOSE OF GON AND BOTH OUR AID AND PEACE CORPS PROJECTS IN NEPAL APPEARED TO BE PROPERLY ORIENTED. THIS WAS FORTUNATE BECAUSE I CONSIDERED IT IMPORTANT THAT OUR DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES BE IN STEP WITH NEPALURS OWN PRIORITIES AND NEEDS AND, AS KING HAD ONCE SAID, THAT THEY BE BEING IMPLEMENTED IN "THE NEPALESE WAY". I WAS IN PROCESS OF REVIEWING ALL OR DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS AND I HOPED FROM TIME TO TIME TO COMPARE NOTES WITH KING AND GET HIS CANDID ASSESSMENT OF OUR ACTIVITIES. COMMENT: I HAD HEARD REPORTS THAT KING HAS SOME BASIC RESERVATIONS ABOUT OVERALL

RECORD OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE IN NEPAL, MOST PARTICULARLY PERFORMANCE OF UNDP. OVER A PERIOD OF TIME I HOPE TO FERRET OUT HIS VIEWS ON THIS QUESTION. END COMMENT.

10. WHILE DISCUSSING DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE KING REFERRED TO ONGOING DISCUSSIONS WITH INDIA REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF NEPAL'S RIVER FOR FLOOD CONTROL, IRRIGATION, AND POWER. HE SAID HIS ADVISORS WERE OF TWO MINDS ON HOW FAR TO PROCEED WITH INDIA. THERE WERE SOME WHO FELT  
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GON LACKED TECHNICAL AND LEGAL EXPERTISE TO NEGOTIATE SATISFACTORY AGREEMENTS WITH INDIA AND THEREFORE SHOULD ESCHEW SUCH ARRANGEMENTS. OTHERS FELT THAT NEPAL'S RIVERS SHOULD BE EXPLOITED IN COLLABORATION WITH INDIA, BUT ONLY IF A THIRD PARTNER WAS ALSO INVOLVED TO HELP INSURE THAT NEPAL GOT A FAIR DEAL. THE KING SEEMED TO FAVOR THE SECOND POINT OF VIEW. I DID NOT PURSUE MATTER GIVEN DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTION (STATE 189288) NOT REPEAT NOT TO GET INTO EASTERN WATERS QUESTION AT THIS TIME BUT KING'S COMMENT LENDS SUPPORT TO VIEW EMBASSY EXPRESSED IN KATHMANDU 3037, THAT NEPAL WOULD BE INTERESTED BUT IS CONCERNED ABOUT ANY ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD BE DOMINATED BY INDIA.

11. REVERTING TO USG INITIATIVES, I NOTED THAT IN ADDITION TO PROPOSED RIGHTS QUESTION AND CONTROL OF INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTICS WERE ALSO HIGH ON THE PRESIDENT'S PRIORITY WHICH KING TOOK IN STRIDE ARE REPORTED IN SEPTTELS.

12. MEETING CONCLUDED AFTER KING HAD REITERATED THAT HIS DOOR WAS ALWAYS OPEN AND THAT I SHOULD NOT HESITATE TO BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM AS OFTEN AS I WISHED. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION HE IDENTIFIED CHIRAN THAPA AS INTERMEDIARY FOR ANY MESSAGES. COMMENT: BELIEVE I AM OFF TO A GOOD START WITH SATISFACTORY UNDERSTANDING ESTABLISHED FOR FUTURE BUSINESS. END COMMENT.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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